

Licensing and Registration

Mission

To protect the economic welfare, health, and peace of the people of Indiana through appropriate licensing.

Summary of Activities

The Business Services Division of the Office of the **Secretary of State** administers activities including the chartering of new businesses, the filing of secured transaction liens under the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC), and the issuance of trademarks, notaries public, and summonses.

The **Alcohol and Tobacco Commission** (ATC) regulates the manufacture, sale, possession, and use of alcoholic beverages through the licensing and registration of more than 75 types of permits. The ATC also regulates the sale, possession, and distribution of tobacco products. Beginning July 1, 2003, any location where tobacco products are sold at retail must obtain a yearly certificate from the Commission.

The **Department of Insurance** licenses and regulates insurance companies and agents. The Company Records Division processes applications for licensure to conduct business in Indiana, while the Agent Licensing Division is responsible for issuing resident and non-resident agent and agency insurance licenses.

The **Professional Standards Board** (PSB) certifies the licensure of all K-12 teachers in Indiana. Teachers must obtain a post-secondary degree from an approved higher education curriculum, pass a licensing examination, and pursue continuing education.

The **Gaming Commission** licenses and regulates casino owners and suppliers, and provides occupational licensing to casino employees. Licenses are granted only after background investigations by the Gaming Enforcement Division of the Indiana State Police establishes that the applicant is suitable for the license.

The **Department of Revenue** (DOR) licenses and regulates charity gaming activities by qualified not-for-profit organizations and manufacturers and distributors of charitable gaming materials. The Motor Fuel Tax Section provides license credentials for various fuel distributors, while the Motor Carrier Services Division regulates the international vehicle registration plan, commercial driver's licensing, oversized & overweight vehicle permitting and safety and insurance registrations.

The **Health Professions Bureau** (HPB) provides administrative support and services for 25 Boards and Committees, including Athletic Trainers, Chiropractors, Dentists, Dietitians, Environmental Health Specialists, Health Facility Administrators, Medical, Nursing, Optometry, Pharmacy, Podiatry, Psychology, Social Language Pathology & Audiology, Veterinary, Hearing Aid Dealers, Hypnotists, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Physicians' Assistants, and Respiratory Care. HPB staff processes all license applications and renewals, and maintains information for verifications of license standing to the health care community and the public. The HPB administers examinations for many of the professions and conducts background research on license applicants.

The **Professional Licensing Agency** (PLA) tests the proficiency of potential licensees, maintains and updates vital information on licensed persons and businesses, and provides regulatory functions for thirteen professions. The PLA oversees the Auctioneer Commission, Boxing Commission, Funeral and Cemetery Service Board, Board of Accountancy, Plumbing Commission, Private Detective Licensing Board, Real Estate Appraiser and Certification Board, Real Estate Commission, Board of Registration for Architects, Board of Barber Examiners, Board of Cosmetology Examiners, Board of Registration for Professional Engineers, and the Board of Registration for Land Surveyors.

Effective July 1, 2003, the Health Professions Bureau and the Professional Licensing Agency consolidated licensing operations resulting in a more efficient response to customer needs.

All persons participating in pari-mutuel racing under the jurisdiction of the **Indiana Horse Racing Commission** are required to obtain an occupational license. The licensing process is the backbone of the Commission's regulatory efforts. Each prospective licensee is fingerprinted. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Indiana State Police provide the Commission with criminal histories of all applicants. The Commission may refuse or deny the application for licensure of any person whose criminal or racing violation record is contrary to the public's best interest. The Commission licenses over 9,000 individuals annually.

External Factors

With the wide variety of licenses and registrations that fall within this program, external factors affecting Licensing and Registration activities are numerous. One consistent factor across all agencies performing these functions is growth. The continued increase in volume of licenses and registrations processed results in increased services provided by the agencies.

Evaluation and Accomplishments

The Office of the Secretary of State enabled citizens and businesses to search databases and print certificates via the Internet. The ATC implemented a new database to process all permits, improved interactions with local regulatory boards, and initiated a host of procedural changes to simplify and improve the permit process.

During the seven years of riverboat operation, the Gaming Commission has issued in excess of 35 suppliers' licenses and over 56,000 occupational licenses. The Horse Racing Commission maintains a simplified licensing process that allows horse owners to renew their licenses through the mail. Indiana was the first state to allow this process of licensure.

The Professional Standards Board received federal funds for the implementation of a new teacher certification process that will be more aligned with classroom teaching skills, continuing education, and Indiana's new academic standards. The Health Professions Bureau recently converted its activity to a new computer system that allows for much quicker issuance of license renewals and allows for greater coordination of all activities, including license verifications and the disciplinary process. The Professional Licensing Agency also implemented a new computer software program. With this new system, each PLA employee is able to service more licenses and print licenses on a daily basis, instead of once a week. This allows the licensees to begin working in their chosen profession as quickly as possible.

The Department of Insurance participates in the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Uniform Certificate of Authority Application (UCAA), which allows a company to apply for a certificate of authority in multiple states with one application. DOI has made its agent disciplinary data base available online so consumers can refer to it before choosing an insurance agent. Non-resident agents can apply online for their licenses and resident agents will soon be able to do the same. DOI also participates in the NAIC's Nationals Insurance Producer (agent) Data Base.

